

Message Text

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ACTION CU-03

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R 211135Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4521

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL, TH

SUBJECT: BICENTENNIAL PROJECT: PACIFIC 21

REF: STATE 089541

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. CHRISTINE AULT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PACIFIC 21 COUNCIL IN LOS ANGELES, INFORMED COMMERCIAL ATTACHE MAY 20 THAT RTG REP HAD SIGNED SPACE RESERVATION FOR PACIFIC 21 EXHIBITION ON PREVIOUS DAY, AND HAD SAID THAILAND DEFINITELY COMMITTED TO PARTICIPATE EVEN THOUGH FINAL CONTRACT NOT YET SIGNED. END SUMMARY.

2. ACCORDING MS. AULT, SHE MET FOUR HOURS MAY 19 WITH INTER-MINISTERIAL GROUP, HEADED BY DIRECTOR GENERAL PRACHA KUNAKASEM OF MFA'S INFORMATION DEPT., WHO WAS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT PARTICIPATION. PRACHA, IN FIFTEEN-MINUTE OPENING STATEMENT TO GROUP, REPORTEDLY SAID THAILAND'S FUTURE INTERESTS ARE DEPENDENT ON THE OTHER PACIFIC NATIONS, AND THE COUNTRY CANNOT AFFORD TO MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY. SOMEONE APPARENTLY ASKED ABOUT THIS ATTITUDE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ANTI-AMERICAN DEMONSTRATIONS AND STATEMENTS THAT WERE THEN TAKING PLACE IN THAILAND. PRACHA ALLEGEDLY REPLIED THAT "BUSINESS AND PEOPLE MATTERS" ARE COMPLETELY SEPARATE FROM "MILITARY MATTERS." SPACE RESERVATION AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED BY MINISTRY OF COMMERCE REP.

3. MS. AULT SAID THAT SOME THIRTEEN SEPARATE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES WERE REPRESENTED AT MEETING, INCLUDING
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MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND

COMMUNICATIONS; BOARD OF INVESTMENT; TOURIST ORGANIZATION OF THAILAND; AND FINE ARTS DEPT., ETC. MUCH OF MEETING WAS EVIDENTLY SPENT ON DISCUSSING POSSIBLE THEMES AND HOW EVENT WOULD BE BUDGETED. PRINCIPAL THEME WILL MOST LIKELY BE TOURISM, TO INCLUDE SENDING TROUPE OF CLASSICAL THAI DANCERS TO L.A. SINCE TRANSPORTATION AND LODGING COSTS OF LATTER WOULD ALONE EXCEED \$50,000, RTG HAS BEEN INVESTIGATING POSSIBILITY OF ALSO PARTICIPATING IN PHILADELPHIA BICENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION DURING SAME VISIT, BUT RTG HAS ALLEGEDLY BEEN HAVING DIFFICULTY IN GETTING REPLIES TO ITS COMMUNICATIONS WITH PHILADELPHIA AUTHORITIES. FUNDS WOULD APPARENTLY COME FROM INDIVIDUAL BUDGETS OF VARIOUS GOVT. AGENCIES, AS WELL AS FROM PRIVATE COMPANIES, SUCH AS AIR SIAM, WHICH WOULD DONATE SOME FREE TRANSPORT. (AULT SAID THAT DURING SUBSEQUENT MEETING SHE HAD WITH PRESIDENT OF THAI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, HE TELEPHONED PRACHA, URGED HIM TO INCREASE SPACE ALREADY RESERVED, AND COMMITTED CHAMBER TO SOLICIT ADDITIONAL FUNDS FROM LOCAL THAI BUSINESS COMPANIES.)

4. COMMENT: MS. AULT, TOGETHER WITH LOCAL PR AGENT WHICH PACIFIC 21 HAS ENGAGED, DESERVE PARTICULAR CREDIT FOR EVIDENT SUCCESS IN BANGKOK DISCUSSIONS, PARTICULARLY IN MANAGING TO BRING SO MANY DIFFERENT AGENCIES TOGETHER ON COMMON GROUND. (EMBASSY HAS FREQUENTLY FOUND ACHIEVING INTRA-GOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION ON OTHER MATTERS A DIFFICULT PROBLEM.) ALTHOUGH EMBASSY INTRODUCED HER TO SOME OF THE KEY THAI CONTACTS DURING A PREVIOUS VISIT LAST SEPTEMBER, SHE HAS CONDUCTED HER OWN NEGOTIATIONS. SHE REPORTED SIMILAR SUCCESS IN TAIPEI, SEOUL, AND MANILA, IS STILL WORKING ON JAPAN AND HONG KONG, AND SAID THAT COLOMBIA AND ECUADOR HAD ALSO RESERVED SPACE. WHILE RTG HAS NOT COME TO EMBASSY FOR ASSISTANCE ON COMMUNICATING WITH PHILADELPHIA, AULT WOULD CLEARLY APPRECIATE ANY ASSISTANCE DEPARTMENT COULD GIVE, SINCE FINALIZING RTG BUDGET FOR PACIFIC 21 EVIDENTLY DEPENDENT ON ITS MAKING SIMILAR ARRANGEMENTS THERE.

WHITEHOUSE

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